

Press release

IBA BioSecurity Addresses Ricin Scare

For immediate release – February 9, 2004

Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium, February 9, 2004 – IBA (Ion Beam Applications S.A.: Reuters IOBA.BR and Bloomberg IBAB.BB) announced today that its US subsidiary, IBA BioSecurity, may be able to provide a solution to threats posed by the USA's recent incident involving the plant toxin, ricin. Since November 2001, IBA has been under contract with the United States Postal Service to process certain of the U.S. mail in an effort to specifically guard against exposure to *Bacillus anthracis* spores (commonly referred to as "anthrax").

IBA has been working closely with government agencies such as the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) and the Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute (AFRRI) to assist in the evaluation of radiation processing as a way to reduce the risks associated with additional biological agents. To support AFRRI's research mission, IBA entered into a contract with AFRRI in September 2003 to assist in the redesign of a facility that is used for such research.

The result of these collaborations suggests that there may be an effective treatment for deactivating ricin. According to Stephen Miller, Head of Radiation Sciences Department at AFRRI, "there is evidence to suggest that the current radiation sanitization process could be modified using a complimentary technique that would destroy ricin and *Bacillus anthracis* spores." IBA concurs with AFRRI's assessment and has initiated a full-scale evaluation of its process specific to the treatment of ricin.

After reviewing the available data, further encouragement for IBA's proposed improvements to its irradiation process was provided in a private communication with NIST physicists. It was stated that, "one can speculate that a significant proportion of the ricin is inactivated by current e-beam mail irradiation."

"Unfortunately, there has not been a great deal of work published on the effect of radiation on dry powdered toxins such as ricin," stated Tim Henry, President of IBA BioSecurity. "When exposed to radiation, the ricin protein absorbs energy. We are proposing a process modification to ensure that this absorbed energy is used to destroy the ricin instead of letting the energy dissipate as heat. With the enhancement, we believe our process can potentially become a complete solution for deactivating ricin."

IBA management does not believe that radiation is the only or ultimate answer to all biological hazards or chemical agents. Rather when used in combination with other precautions, the company believes that radiation could continue to be an essential and effective tool in the destruction of harmful contaminants – much like its utilization within the medical and healthcare industries. "It is our goal to help apply this technology as needed and where appropriate," concluded Henry.

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About IBA

Founded in 1986, IBA is a global innovator in the design and development of particle accelerators, therapeutic and diagnostic dosimetry equipment, sterilization and ionization services, and the production and distribution of radiopharmaceuticals. With operations at more than 50 sites, spanning 12 countries and 3 continents, IBA provides extensive expertise and state-of-the-art services and equipment to numerous world markets in healthcare and industry. A selection of IBA clients includes top-ranking medical device manufacturers, specialized centers for the diagnosis and treatment of cancer, and the United States Postal Service. IBA stock is listed on the pan-European stock exchange, EURONEXT, and is part of the market segment NextEconomy.

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